

REMARKS

Claims 1, 2, 4-9, 11-13 and 15-32 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 1 and 22 are amended to address a rejection under 35 USC 112.

No new matter is added to the application by this Amendment. The new features added to claims 1 and 22 find support in the specification, as originally filed, at, for example, page 8, line 32 – page 9, line 11.

Reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested.

I. Rejection Under 35 USC 112

Claims 1, 2, 4-9, 11-13 and 15-32 were rejected under 35 USC 112, second paragraph, as allegedly being indefinite. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

The Patent Office alleges that claims 1 and 22 are indefinite because the amount of residual solvent content is without basis (i.e., is the amount based on volume or weight?).

Claims 1 and 22 were amended to set forth that the amount of residual solvent content is based on the weight of the adhesive.

Applicants submit that amended claims 1 and 22 are definite and particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicants regard as the invention.

Thus, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection under 35 USC 112, second paragraph.

II. Rejections Under 35 USC 102

Claims 1, 2, 5-9, 11-13, 15-17 and 19-31 were rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by JP 09-286958 to Azuma et al. (hereinafter "Azuma").

Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

The Patent Office alleges that Azuma discloses each and every feature recited in claims 1, 2, 5-9, 11-13, 15-17 and 19-31. Applicants respectfully disagree with the allegations by the Patent Office.

The Patent Office admits that Azuma does not include any of the solvents that are discussed in the instant specification (see page 3 of the Office Action). Claims 1 and 22 were amended such that pressure sensitive adhesive has a residual solvent selected from the group consisting of water, at least one organic solvent and mixtures thereof.

As admitted by the Patent Office, Azuma fails to disclose a pressure-sensitive adhesive comprising a residual solvent and having a residual solvent content of not more than 0.5% by weight of the adhesive, wherein the residual solvent is selected from the group consisting of water, at least one organic solvent and mixtures thereof as required by amended claims 1 and 22.

Because the features of independent claims 1 and 22 are neither taught nor suggested by Azuma, Azuma cannot anticipate, and would not have rendered obvious, the features specifically defined in claims 1 and 22 and their dependent claims.

For at least these reasons, claims 1, 2, 5-9, 11-13, 15-17 and 19-31 are patentably distinct from and/or non-obvious in view of Azuma. Reconsideration and

withdrawal of the rejection of the claims under 35 USC 102(b) are respectfully requested.

III. Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. 103

Claims 4, 18 and 32 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Azuma in view of EP 0 018 643 to Boyce et al. (hereinafter "Boyce") or US 5,851,663 to Parsons et al. (hereinafter "Parsons"). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Boyce and/or Parsons do not remedy the deficiencies of Azuma as set forth above with respect to independent claims 1 and 22, from which claims 4, 18 and 32 directly or indirectly depend. Boyce and/or Parsons fail to remedy the deficiencies of Azuma because Boyce and/or Parsons also fails to teach a pressure sensitive adhesive having (i) a residual solvent selected from the group consisting of water, at least one organic solvent and mixtures thereof and (ii) a residual solvent content of not more than 0.5%.

Thus, Azuma, Boyce and Parsons, taken singly or in combination, fail to teach or suggest a pressure-sensitive adhesive comprising a residual solvent and having a residual solvent content of not more than 0.5% by weight of the adhesive, wherein the residual solvent is selected from the group consisting of water, at least one organic solvent and mixtures thereof as required by amended claims 1 and 22.

Because the features of independent claims 1 and 22 are neither taught nor suggested by Azuma, Boyce and Parsons, taken singly or in combination, these

references would not have rendered obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art, the features specifically defined in claims 1 and 22 and their dependent claims.

For at least these reasons, claims 4, 18 and 32 are patentable over Azuma in view of Boyce or Parsons. Thus, withdrawal of the rejection under 35 USC 103(a) is respectfully requested.

IV. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 1, 2, 4-9, 11-13 and 15-32 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Early and favorable action is earnestly solicited.

CONDITIONAL PETITION FOR EXTENSION OF TIME

If entry and consideration of the amendments above requires an extension of time, Applicants respectfully request that this be considered a petition therefor. The Commissioner is authorized to charge any fee(s) due in this connection to Deposit Account No. 14-1263.

ADDITIONAL FEE

Please charge any insufficiency of fees, or credit any excess, to Deposit Account
No. 14-1263.

Respectfully submitted,
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